

GUIDELINE TITLE:	MHS Communication Guidelines
YEAR OF PUBLICATION:	February 2019
REVIEW DATE:	March 2020

The Margaret Hendry School (MHS) Communication Guidelines cover the full range of communication methods/avenues that the school employs to engage with the school and wider community. All school based staff operate under the ACT Public Service Code of Conduct. In addition to this, all teachers operate under the ACT Teacher’s Code of Professional Practice and the National Professional Standards for Teachers (Standard 7).

Our communication methods are selected to meet the diverse needs of our school community, and are reflective of the technological world in which we live. As we work towards 5 star accreditation as a sustainable school, we embrace digital communication methods to reduce our carbon footprint. Families who do not use email or have a smartphone are provided with hard copies of all communication upon request.

General Communication Guidelines (As outlined in the legislation)

Communication Goal	Protocol guidelines
Effective communication	Communication aims to be: Open and honest Polite, courteous and professional Respectful, treating colleagues and others with decency Empathetic and thoughtful, allowing others to explain action and thought processes.
Be Accountable	Staff will: Take responsibility for and consider the consequences of decisions and actions Use information appropriately and respect the different capacities in which they deal with individuals Promote an environment that is accepting of diversity, and is free from intimidation, threat, humiliation and harassment Use all electronic communication systems including social media in accordance with government and departmental policies.
Be Constructive and Professional	Staff will: Take steps to resolve problems.
Take our Job Seriously	Staff will: Act professionally and recognise the trust placed in us as public servants.
Give and receive information and advice without fear:	Staff will: Share information appropriately. Store information in accordance with government and departmental policies
Problems with communication	If staff members require support with communication, issues should be referred to the principal and/or the REDCO (Respect, Equity and Diversity Contact Officer) in the school.

School and Community Communication Protocols

Communication type	Protocol guidelines	Timeframes
Records of Communication	Correspondence (written and verbal) between staff and families are recorded in the Student Administration System. This provides a timestamp and record of communication.	Ongoing

<p>Face to face meetings</p>	<p>Formal opportunities are provided throughout the year for parents/carers to meet with teachers (Appendix A).</p> <p>Staff members may contact parents at any time throughout the year if they wish to make an appointment for an interview. The school values informal communication and the benefits to establishing a positive relationship with families.</p> <p>Parents/carers may ring the school office for an appointment time or to catch the teacher (either personally or via letter or email) or engage in a doorstep discussion at any time throughout the year. An unplanned 'doorstop' interview at drop off or pick up will be short in nature as teachers have meetings after school.</p>	<p>Formal meetings as outlined in the Overview of Reporting/Information Schedule (refer below)</p> <p>As required</p> <p>Staff members will endeavour to set an appointment time within 3 working days of receiving a request.</p>
<p>Emails</p>	<p>Emails to teachers are to be directed to a teacher's individual Education and Training Directorate email addresses. All email addresses take the format of firstname.surname@ed.act.edu.au. The MHS administrative address is margarethendry@ed.act.edu.au</p>	<p>The school administration and teachers will endeavour to respond to emails within 3 working days of receipt.</p>
<p>Phone calls</p>	<p>All phone calls to the school are received by the front office. The office staff will notify the teacher in writing of the call. Teachers are not available to return calls during learning time.</p> <p>Teachers may carry mobile phones to be used for phone calls in emergencies or to take photos to document learning. Photos taken using phones are downloaded and stored appropriately on school based systems.</p> <p>Teachers may not provide their personal phone number to parents/carers.</p>	<p>Staff members will endeavour to return calls within 3 days of receiving a request.</p>
<p>Social Media</p>	<p>MHS uses social media to share real time documentation of children's learning, school events and celebrations.</p> <p>MHS staff do not engage in conversation over social media. All queries, comments or questions that parents would like a response to are requested to be sent through to the margarethendry@ed.act.edu.au email address.</p>	<p>MHS staff endeavour to post each day. School events are also communicated through the facebook page and families can indicate their attendance through this avenue.</p>
<p>School notes</p>	<p>School notes are sent via the school sway or direct email to families. Families can make a request to the front office to receive notes in hardcopy if they do not have access to email or a smartphone.</p>	<p>We endeavour to send any note requiring financial contribution from families home with a minimum of a two week turn around.</p>
<p>Sway</p>	<p>The Sway is sent home to families four times a term via email. It is also available on the school website.</p>	<p>Published Weeks 1, 3, 6 and 9</p>
<p>Website</p>	<p>The School Website holds much of the information families need to keep up to date with the school. The school's philosophy and vision for teaching and learning are detailed on the website. All events and notes can be accessed through the school website. https://www.education.act.gov.au/Margaret-Hendry-School/home</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>School sign</p>	<p>The digital display at the entrance to the school is updated as required to promote school events and celebrate children's learning.</p>	<p>School Sign updated as required</p>
<p>Foyer Display Screens (front office and preschool)</p>	<p>The two display screens are updated regularly to share information with families around upcoming events, showcase who we are as a school and celebrate learning and growth.</p>	<p>Updated as required</p>

Reporting incidents and concerns	<p>Many concerns are resolved quickly and easily by discussing the matter directly with the school. Families are welcome to talk through concerns at any time with their child's home learning coach, the team leader or the school's leadership team. If your concern isn't resolved through these avenues, please make an appointment to speak to the principal.</p> <p>Appointments can be made by contacting the school office on 61422800.</p> <p>Families may contact a parent representative on the School Board to discuss matters concerning school governance.</p> <p>Further assistance is provided through the ACT Education Directorate, Liaison Unit on 62055429 or Email DET.CommunityLiaison@act.gov.au</p>	<p>As required</p> <p>Appointments can be made to discuss concerns. make an appointment contact the home learning coach. If you require further support you are encouraged to contact a member of the leadership team.</p>
Community Connect network	<p>Each learning neighbourhood has a Community Connect volunteer. The primary role of the Community Connect volunteer is to facilitate a network for the children and families in that learning neighbourhood. The Community Connect volunteer will organise and invite families to events throughout the year to build the sense of community within the neighbourhood and more broadly across the learning community.</p>	Ongoing
P&C and School Board Meeting	<p>The P&C meet regularly to discuss updates on the Annual Action Plan as well as plan and run events and community gatherings around the school. P&C may be requested to assist with school events throughout the year. All families are members of P&C. The School Board meet twice per term to discuss the governance of the school, including the strategic plan and the school finances. Nominated parents and teachers are members of the school board.</p>	<p>P&C once per month</p> <p>School Board twice per term</p>
Community Breakfast	<p>Each term we hold a Community Breakfast. The breakfasts provide an informal opportunity for the exchange of information and to network with other families. They are hosted by the MHS staff and a member of the leadership team is regularly in attendance. Breakfast is held in the school hall every Wednesday beginning Week 3 Term 1. All parents, carers, grandparents, volunteers and young siblings (toys available) are most welcome. There are special celebration breakfasts held throughout the year for Mother's Day, Father's Day and Children's Week.</p>	<p>Breakfast is held in the school hall. They generally coincide with an event such as Mother's Day, Father's Day or Children's Week. Families are informed of the dates for the breakfasts through school based communication methods.</p>
Open letter about your child	<p>At the beginning of the year families are invited to write a letter or complete an information overview to be provided to the home learning coach. This letter provides information about children's individual personality, their family context, character traits and anything that the family would like the teachers to know about their child.</p>	Term 1

Communicating about learning protocols

Information Sessions	<p>At the start of each year, the school runs an out of school hours information session about the curriculum and learning programs of the school. This is a chance for families to meet their child's teachers/ learning coaches, to look at the learning neighbourhoods and meet members of the leadership team.</p> <p>Family workshops and information sessions are delivered throughout the year to support families to assist their child's literacy and numeracy development at home.</p>	<p>Term 1</p> <p>Ongoing (termly)</p>
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Collaborative interviews	Families are welcome to meet with learning coaches at anytime to discuss their child's progress. Twice a year formal interviews are offered to families to discuss academic progress and social and emotional development. These interviews are attended by the home learning coach, the family and the child. Home learning coaches will contact families at other times if they would like to discuss any concerns they have about children's progress.	Term 1 and 3
SchoolTalk	Each family has access to their child's SchoolTalk account through the parent portal. Families are provided with a login which enables them to view their children's learning timetable for the day, their achievement against the learning progressions, and evidence of their learning. This tool enables families to support children's learning at home through extending on school inquiries and generating topics of conversation linked to children's learning.	Ongoing
Communication Book	For students who have identified communication issues, teachers will establish regular communication with families. This may be in the form of a communication book or email. This communication is adjusted to suit the age and needs of the student and is used to communicate messages as well as outline what has happened with learning experiences to allow a family member to talk with a child about their school experience.	As negotiated between staff and family
Celebrations of learning	Children's learning success, growth and personal achievement are celebrated within their learning neighbourhood with their peers.	Ongoing
Community Gatherings	Gatherings are a celebration of learning that has occurred and a chance for the whole school to come together. These are held at different times throughout the year and families are invited to attend.	To be determined during 2019
Inquiry Journals	Inquiry journals are used to document each child's individual learning journey over the course of the school year. The learning stories included represent the individual child and their learning and growth in a range of curriculum areas including indoor and outdoor play.	The Inquiry journal is on display in learning neighbourhoods and is taken home at the end of the school year. In 2019 we will be phasing out the Inquiry journal in place of a digital portfolio option offered through SchoolTalk.
Term Overviews	Each term staff write an overview outlining the learning that will be occurring and any class specific information such as class routines, days for specialist programs and any special events coming up. This is also accompanied by a calendar of events for the term that can be stuck on the fridge at home for reference.	Week 1 of each term
Learning Walks	Learning walks provide the opportunity for families to see their child's learning in action. Leadership team members lead families through the learning neighbourhoods, discussing the approach to teaching and learning and showing by example how children have agency, choice and voice in their learning.	By appointment. Opportunity to participate in learning walks are advertised through the sway and on the website.

Appendix A - Reporting and Information Schedule

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitations sent home early in the term for parents to write to their child’s home learning coach about their child (an alternative proforma is available if required). NB: For Preschool this occurs at the end of the previous school year in conjunction with collaborative interviews • Welcome BBQ and Information session (week 2) • PIPS assessment Kindergarten (reports sent home to parents when they arrive –usually late in the term) • Individual Learning Plan (ILP) meetings between families and Home learning coaches. • Personalised Learning Plan meetings between families and Home learning coaches for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students • SCANs* for Kindergarten students enrolled in the Integration Support program (ISP) • In class formative and summative assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ILPs reviewed. Progress report for semester 1 sent home • Written Report, A-E Report (yrs 1-6 as requested) Shift report • In class formative and summative assessments • NAPLAN conducted in year 3 and 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustments to ILPs as required • In class formative and summative assessments • School Satisfaction Survey for parents, staff and children NAPLAN reports sent home to families • Shift report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIPS assessment Kinder • PIPS report sent home to Kinder families (late term) • ILPs reviewed • Transition meetings as required • Written Report, A-E Report (yrs 1-6 as requested) Shift report • Preschool interviews for enrolling preschool students conducted • In class formative and summative assessments

*SCAN - Student Centred Appraisal of Need

*PIPS - Performance Indicators in Primary School- at start and end of Kindergarten year

*PLP- Personal Learning Plan